

# BULLYING IN THE WORKPLACE

## WHAT IS WORKPLACE BULLYING?

Workplace bullying is repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or a group of workers that creates a risk to health and safety.

**Repeated behaviour** refers to the persistent nature of the behaviour and can refer to a range of behaviours over time.

**Unreasonable behaviour** means behaviour that a reasonable person, having considered the circumstances, would see as unreasonable, including behaviour that is victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening.

Single incidents of unreasonable behaviour can also present a risk to health and safety and will not be tolerated.

### Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Inappropriately excluding a co-worker from meetings or communications,
- Demeaning or belittling someone,
- Inappropriately commencing disciplinary action,
- Spreading gossip or rumours,
- Use of abusive or intimidating behaviour,
- Excessive micro-management,
- Setting impossible targets or deadlines, and
- Displaying offensive or degrading materials.

## What is not workplace bullying?

Reasonable management action taken by managers or supervisors to direct and control the way work is carried out is not workplace bullying if the action is carried out in a lawful and reasonable way, taking the particular circumstances into account.

### Examples of reasonable managerial action include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Proper use of performance management or disciplinary processes
- Providing fair and reasonable feedback
- Setting challenging targets or deadlines
- Requiring compliance with workplace policies and procedures
- Workplace restructuring

## What can you do?

Workplaces should have appropriate policies and procedures in place if an incident occurs.

If you feel you are experiencing or witnessing workplace bullying, and are not comfortable dealing with the problem yourself, or your attempts to do so have not been successful, you should raise the issue promptly either with your supervisor, health and safety representative or another manager within the organisation.

If you witness unreasonable behaviour you should bring the matter to the attention of your manager.